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Report of Activities

March 28 to April 1, 1960.

Levittown:

Thursday, March 24th - At ten o'clock on this morning, Mrs. Lett and I, on leave from regular employment, reported at the offices of Levitt & Son on the Levittown site, Route 130, Burlington County, New Jersey. An office conference with chief counsel and vice-president Goldman and two assistants spelled out in detail our goals, methods, duties and responsibilities within the framework of a statement of intent prepared by Levitt interests. After lunch, there was assembled in Levitt administrative offices a group of approximately 30 persons representing all but three of the town's clergy, two of the three township committeemen members of the Board of Education, the school principal, township solicitor and Levitt sales manager.

A long discussion followed this representative's opening remarks, giving opportunity to measure attitudes prevailing in the community. No voice was raised suggesting opposition to the change; many expressed varying degrees of calm acceptance to gratification for the proposed move toward integration.

The drawn-out session closed after 7 P.M. with several agreements worked out: (a) the corporation would set up a formal statement of purpose for the clergymen and township committee (b) all clergymen would read this statement in Sunday morning services, supplemented by their own remarks or sermon (c) a committee of the clergy would work out a proposal for further activities in the town, and for suggesting appointment of a Committee on Human Relations by the township committee (d) Levitt & Sons would add their voice to the Human Relations Committee proposal (e) all agreed upon a release date of the story of policy change, to be not before Sunday noon. (f) Levitt would continue with other proposed steps in the public relations program: (g) The Letts and a companion white consultant, Theron Johnson, would stand by to be available on call.

Friday, March 25th: - At Friday luncheon, a similar conference was held with publishers and editors of Levittown's two papers, one weekly and one daily. An off-the-record session, its purpose was to fully acquaint them with all background information and proposed release date in the maintenance of confidence, good relations and judicial treatment of the story. This representative and Mrs. Lett were questioned actively in their consultative role.

The late afternoon was spent in Haddonfield and Camden and in telephoning Fort Dix and elsewhere, in attempts to locate and interview the number of persons in the area whose information sheets identified them as Negro applicants. At 9 P.M. the entire Levitt sales force of 15 men received a formal notice of purpose, and instructions, from the chief counsel. The consultants spent some time spelling out their role and responsibility in the new program, also giving background information on the meaning of the fears extent and the realities of race and housing. The resulting discussions led far into the night. Saturday was spent interviewing applicants and making other contacts and most of Sunday in writing necessary correspondence and telephoning.

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### East St. Louis, Illinois

Monday, March 28: Banking and other preparation for this trip led up to the afternoon train to East St. Louis. Arriving Tuesday, March 29 at noon on Tuesday, we were taken by Dora Burner and Patrolman Rittenhouse directly to the Birative hotel where participants in the police institute were attended. The morning session just concluded had presented the lectures of two professors from the University of Illinois to approximately 120 persons who included 60 police officers and officials from 18 local departments, four sheriffs offices and the highway patrol, as well as high school students, clergy and other citizens. Representatives were there from Southern Illinois communities from as far as 100 miles distant. About 10% of the group were Negro officers, students and adult civic leaders. Our presentation of "The Voice of the Minority" was very well received and resulted in active discussion. The talk was taped by the Police Department and gratifying echoes of its reception were heard later in the St. Louis Police department across the river.

On Tuesday night, at dinner in Granite City, Illinois, Dora and this representative met with 22 representatives of management and labor drawn from four industrial committees of the East St. Louis area (names and connections will be supplied us). The story of NCCJ was told, with emphasis on the goals and methods of the Commission on Labor-Management Organizations. The very lively discussion moved into race relations where the greatest interest and feeling lay, but this generated such interest that all agreed that machinery should be provided for continuing such discussions. The chairman was authorized to set up a planning committee.

### St. Louis, Missouri

Wednesday, March 30: Meeting Virgil Border and his associate, Bill Liggett at NCCJ headquarters at 10:30, briefing was given for the three sessions planned for the day. The first of these was a luncheon talk to the Unity Club, a group of 15 intergroup professionals to whom was presented the NCCJ concern with increased communication. Four areas of special concern to this ~~non-communicating~~ representative were spelled out to the group, viz: need for intensifying leadership training in intergroup understanding, need for developing new awareness and new tools for coping with increasing cynicism in youth, particularly Negro youth; greater study on our part of the significance of Negro mass protests, and more active interpretation of this to our communities; and lastly, for the attention of Negro professionals particularly, the serious need for the location, mobilization and activation of the great body of young, university trained Negro leadership potential, which currently is evading its responsibilities. Appreciation for the validity and importance of these thoughts, was expressed in ensuing discussion.

A 3 o'clock meeting in Police headquarters saw assembled the new Police Chief Bostron, his deputy chief, inspector in charge of training, police major who heads all operations, head of the detective and mobile unit operations, a captain who had participated on substitute for Chief Bostron the day before in East St. Louis, the department, statistician and five members of the citizens' police advisory committee.

Following a brief presentation of NCCJ's concern with police training and our emphasis on all opened channels of communication including Labor-Management, religious and educational, lengthy discussion ensued on method and purpose of various human relations training proposals. Michigan State and Asbury Park brochures were left with Chief Bostron who evinced great interest in the subject and made copious notes on the discussion.

The foregoing meeting lasted to an hour that gave not much more than the dinner hour before the convening of about 30 St. Louis public and parochial school teachers in the library of St. Louis University. They represented an informal organization of persons specifically concerned with the program of racial integration in the schools. Our talk was well received and active discussion continued until terminated by the chairlady from the discussion came a motion and consensus requiring Virgil Border, the group's counsellor, to make representations to the Board of Education in the group's name: (a) for appointment of an intergroup relations specialists to fill the vacancy resulting from the death of the original incumbent of this post; and (b) proposing initiation of intergroup education for teachers on the undergraduate and in-service levels.

END.